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SUBJECT: DASD WILKES DELIVERS AFGHAN OPTIONS TO JAPAN

Classified By: CDA James Zumwalt; Reasons: 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C/NF) Summary: Japanese officials and politicians indicated a willingness to consider substantial new financial and personnel contributions to Afghanistan in response to an updated set of Afghan options presented on July 15-16 by DASD for Central Asia Bobby Wilkes. DASD Wilkes' Japanese interlocutors said that Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda would make the final decision on the proposed package of Afghan contributions, which included aerial logistics, a medical network, and support for Afghan security forces, but cautioned that prospects for a new Self-Defense Force (SDF) mission appear increasingly dim given domestic political turmoil. Ministry of Defense (MOD) Defense Policy Bureau Director General Nobushige Takamizawa urged the U.S. to take a longer view of possible Japanese military roles, suggesting that Japanese forces should begin preparations for a more robust operation in the 2010-2011 timeframe. Off-line, MOFA officials expressed frustration over the political leadership's equivocations over dispatching SDF personnel and urged the President to call the Prime Minister to reinforce the importance of Japan making a "substantial" contribution to coalition efforts in Afghanistan. Representatives from ISAF Embassies offered to support follow-on engagement with the Japanese government, noting that bilateral approaches on Afghanistan had thus far not been effective. End Summary.

¶2. (C/REL ISAF) DASD for Central Asia Bobby Wilkes met July 15-16 with senior officials from Japan's Cabinet Secretariat, MOFA, MOD, and ruling and opposition parties to press Japan to implement a package of measures to support coalition stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. Wilkes noted that the package of initiatives was compiled in response to Prime Minister Fukuda's assertion to the President on July 6 that the dispatch of CH-47s or a full PRT would be impossible in the current political environment. While the U.S. judged that these two missions would qualify as "substantive" in terms of their benefits to ISAF and the Afghan people, the U.S. would also accept a package of smaller contributions that would, taken together, offer similar benefits.

Option B

¶3. (C/NF) In each of his meetings, Wilkes outlined what the U.S. would expect in terms of a package of new Afghan contributions: 1) dedicated airlift by C-130s, and possibly 1-2 CH-47s, for country-wide logistics or direct support to the Lithuanian PRT in RC-West; 2) dispatch of civilian or

military experts to PRTs run by a third country 3) a medical a network consisting of a 40-45 bed hospital and set of 10-15 bed satellite clinics; 4) USD 200 million contribution for Afghan elections in 2009 and 2010; and 5) USD 20 billion for the expansion of Afghan security forces and judicial structures. In addition to these specific contributions, Wilkes noted the importance of Japan's leaders committing themselves and the Japanese people to the mission of aiding Afghanistan and its people.

¶4. (C/NF) Deputy Vice Foreign Minister Chikao Kawai told DASD Wilkes that Japan clearly understood from the President's July 6 conversation with Prime Minister Fukuda that Japan needs to do more in Afghanistan. He asserted that, in the near term, Japan faces significant operational, legal, and political hurdles to undertaking a military operation. Kawai thanked the U.S. government for compiling a new package and offered Japan's "best efforts" to provide a positive response. He noted, however, that time was short given the need to submit new legislation to authorize the dispatch of SDF personnel. Since the government intends to submit legislation to extend Japan's maritime refueling mission by the end of August, Tokyo will need to decide within the coming week whether it will need to expand the current draft bill to include a ground mission in Afghanistan. MOFA officials said that Japan will try to formally respond to the U.S. proposal in 1-3 weeks.

SDF Role: Getting Cold Feet?

¶5. (C/NF) Off-line, MOFA Foreign Policy Bureau Deputy Director General Kazuyoshi Umemoto told the Embassy that the Prime Minister has been briefed on the C-130 operations proposed by DASD Wilkes but has not yet indicated the direction of his thinking on the matter. Umemoto assessed, however, that short of a strong personal appeal from the President early in the week of July 21, it is likely that the Prime Minister will decide against taking the domestic political risk that the mission would entail. Umemoto bemoaned that Japan's political leaders badly miscalculated by signaling to the United States that they would send SDF forces without adequately preparing themselves to sell the concept to coalition leaders focused almost exclusively on upcoming elections.

¶6. (C/REL ISAF) Umemoto's negative assessment over a near-term SDF deployment was echoed in virtually all of DASD Wilkes' meetings. MOD Defense Policy Bureau DG Takamizawa urged the U.S. to take a longer view of Japan's potential military contributions. Takamizawa claimed that he was surprised by how unprepared for performing expeditionary the SDF is, citing a range of upgrades needed for Japan's C-130s and CH-47s to be fully capable of operating in Afghanistan. Rather than pressing for a near-term small-scale SDF dispatch in the current difficult political environment, Takamizawa said that it would be better to prepare the SDF for a more robust mission in the 2010-2011 timeframe. Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Acting Security Affairs Council Chairman Yasukazu Hamada told Wilkes that he "hates giving excuses why Japan can not do what it should do in the world," but stated that it is more practical to prepare for a major mission in the medium term rather than expecting the ruling coalition to risk a showdown with the opposition over a new ground mission in the coming 12 months.

Interest in Other Options

¶7. (C/REL ISAF) Most of DASD Wilkes' interlocutors suggested that the U.S. and Japan shift their focus to those elements of the package that do not require new legislative authority, such as sending civilian experts to PRTs or providing additional economic assistance. MOFA Aid Policy Division Director Naoki Ito noted that Japan has long experience in assisting in the development of health care structures along the lines of what was proposed in the latest U.S. package. LDP Acting Foreign Affairs Council Chairman Seishiro Eto

suggested that Japan go further than simply building one set of medical facilities and take complete responsibility for standing-up Afghanistan's health care system nation-wide. Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Vice President Seiichi Maehara said that Japan should also consider sending irrigation experts to PRTs around Afghanistan to assist crop-substitution efforts in support of ISAF's counter-narcotics mission.

¶18. (C/REL ISAF) During a July 16 inter-agency session to review the latest U.S. proposal, Japanese officials sought specific details on what role Japanese experts could play in various PRTs around Afghanistan beyond the work already being done by 70 Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) personnel working in the Kabul region. MOD's Takamizawa noted that the SDF may be able to send subject matter experts to PRTs without legislation, if they were seconded to MOFA and dispatched under diplomatic status. MOFA National Security Division Deputy Director Shingo Miyamoto suggested the possibility of Japan chartering private airlift assets to support third-country PRT operations or nation-wide air support if Tokyo is unable to send its own C-130s for political reasons.

¶19. (C/NF) Japanese officials also expressed interest in the details of the proposed five-year USD 20 billion Japanese contribution to support Afghan stability operations. MOFA International Cooperation Bureau officials noted that Japan has self-imposed limits on its ability to provide financial assistance to foreign militaries, although they are able to provide non-lethal support to police activities. MOFA North American Affairs DG Shunichi Nishimiya was more positive, noting that Japan has gradually expanded its interpretation of what can be providing to support security operations. "If there is anywhere in the world where we will be able to find creative ways to go even further," he added, "it is Afghanistan." The LDP's Eto said he fully understood Washington's request for a major new funding commitment to Afghanistan. He added that since Japan is unable to provide financial support to the Six-Party Process on North Korea due to the abduction issue, it is only natural for it to make significant additional contributions to Afghanistan.

Coalition Support

¶10. (C/NF) During a set of meetings with diplomats and attaches from ISAF member embassies, there was general agreement that a coordinated approach to Japan on Afghanistan will have a greater chance of success than previous bilateral interventions. New Zealand Defense Attache Capt. John Campbell said that his country has offered Japan training for participating in PRT operations. This could help Japan respond to the U.S. request for a Japanese presence on the ground. Canadian Political Counselor Karen MacArthur commented that a U.S. briefing for Washington-based ISAF diplomats would help the Tokyo-based diplomatic corps raise the profile of Japan's potential as an Afghan partner back in their capitals. DASD Wilkes suggested follow-on meetings with ISAF diplomats in both Washington and Tokyo to coordinate coalition messages to the Japanese government and public.

Comment: Avoiding Risk has its Price

¶11. (C/NF) Prime Minister Fukuda has yet to show his hand, but the clear message conveyed during DASD Wilkes visit was that the political will to risk a new military operation in Afghanistan is waning. That said, Japanese officials and politicians seem fully aware that they cannot simply walk away from Afghanistan after raising U.S. expectations at such high levels without seriously damaging the Alliance. This sense of obligation offers important leverage for gaining near-term commitments to major new financial and civilian contributions for Afghan development and security programs. In addition, the U.S. should keep up pressure on Japan to immediately enhance the expeditionary capabilities of the SDF

so that there will be more options on the table when the domestic political environment improves. Enlisting ISAF coalition partners will also be helpful in pushing the Japanese government towards more robust contributions and raising awareness of the situation in Afghanistan among the Japanese public and political leadership.

ZUMWALT